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THE KOREAN PEOPLE IN THE STRUGGLE
 FOR UNIFICATION AND INDEPENDENCE

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Five years ago, on 15 August 1945, the heroic Soviet Army, having destroyed the Kwantung Army, freed the Korean people from Japanese slavery. The Korean people greet the fifth anniversary of their liberation under very trying conditions, as they selflessly defend the independence of their native land and resolutely struggle for the realization of their deepest desire -- the creation of a united, independent, democratic Korea.

This is the second month that war has flamed across the fields of Korea, a war that is open aggression by the American imperialists who would turn Korea into an American colony.

The threat of the spread of a colonial order such as that produced by the Americans in South Korea, the common desire of the Korean people for the unity of their land, and the hatred of the people for the invaders have all helped to produce a tremendous political uprising of the masses who, united around the government of the People's Republic, are carrying on a daring struggle for their national independence.

Weary from 40 years of Japanese oppression, the Korean people greeted their Soviet liberators with rejoicing. With enthusiasm they proceeded to liquidate the remains of the Japanese colonial regime.

The Korean people found open before them a new path, a path of national renaissance and free, democratic development. On 6 September 1945, in Seoul, the capital of Korea, more than 1,000 representatives of people's committees, democratic parties, and other social organizations of the land met in the first congress of people's delegates. This broadly representative convention met to decide the fate of the nation. It established a republic and chose a Central Republic People's Committee consisting of representatives of various parties and organizations. It planned a broad program of democratic reforms, including agrarian reform, nationalization of the property of Japanese monopolies, revival of Korean culture, etc.

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However, not all the Korean people were able to enjoy freedom from the Japanese yoke. The population of South Korea found itself in a new imperialistic bondage, having come under the control of American colonialists.

The US has broken all the promises it made concerning the assistance it would give the Korean people to create an independent and democratic government. The temporary division of the country along the 38th Parallel, made to facilitate the disarming of Japanese troops, was used by the US for the creation of a real political boundary, after the US had set up the reactionary southern government and prevented the unification of the country.

The northern part of the country proceeded along the path of free, and democratic development. The policy of the USSR facilitated this more than anything else. While striving for a unified and independent Korea and defending the right of the Korean people to an independent existence, the Soviet Union did not interfere in the internal affairs of the country and demanded the same of other nations. Many facts testify to this. The Soviet Union, in talks with the US, and in the UN, repeatedly proposed that foreign troops be withdrawn from Korea and that the Korean people be given the right to decide their own fate. As is well known, the US rejected all these proposals and in May 1948 set up a puppet regime in Seoul.

In August 1948, on the initiative of 70 social organizations of north and south, elections to the Supreme People's Assembly of the People's Republic were held. In North Korea, 99.97 percent of all eligible voters took part in free elections. In South Korea, despite terrorist activity, 77.52 percent of all those eligible voted. The government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, headed by Kim Il-sung, was formed as a result of these elections. It is the sole legal government of Korea, and is now fighting to free the country from its oppressors.

At the request of the North Korean government, the Soviet Union was the first to establish diplomatic relations, and in December 1948 withdrew its troops from North Korea. On 17 March 1949 a 10-year agreement for economic and cultural cooperation was signed by the USSR and North Korea.

During the last 5 years, North Korea has been very successful in introducing a number of reforms and in creating conditions for the rapid development of the nation's economy and culture. The law on agrarian reform provided for the distribution of land to about 725,000 farm laborers, landless peasants, and small landholders, at the expense of former Japanese colonialists and Korean gentry. Banks, transport, and basic industries were nationalized. The national economy of North Korea was prospering. By 1948, the gross output of all production had more than doubled. The 2-year plan for restoration and development of the people's economy was being fulfilled. The 1949 plan was fulfilled 103 percent. Agricultural production increased. In the dry year of 1949, the harvest was 30 percent larger than it had been in 1944. Unemployment was eliminated; the number of workers was almost twice what it had been in the first days of the republic. The workers' standard of living was rising.

Particularly impressive are the successes in the cultural field. In a period of 5 years, illiteracy among adults was all but wiped out. In 1945, 80 percent of the population could neither read nor write. Sixteen institutions of higher learning were established, training more than 10,000 students. Fifty-five technical schools and 131 factory technical schools are in operation. About 2 million children are in school.

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This year compulsory primary education is being introduced. The publication of literature in Korean has been undertaken. The works of the founders of Marxism, of Stalin, and of Lenin are being published. National art has experienced a rebirth: theaters, groups of amateurs, dance troupes, and musical groups are all active.

The achievements of North Korea inspired the entire people in a decisive struggle for unification of their land. In bringing about military operations, the reactionaries intended to destroy the power of the People's Republic in the northern half of the country and extend their terroristic regime throughout all Korea. The failure of this plan has shown again how deep are the revolutionary changes that have taken place in the North and how closely the people are united around their republican government and Labor Party, under the leadership of that outstanding democrat, Kim Il-song.

In contrast to the policy of the Soviet Union, which is inspired by a deep respect for the sovereignty of all peoples, US policy has created a new slavery in South Korea, the liquidation of national independence, police terror, mass murders, and a civil war, and has resulted in direct imperialist aggression.

The American imperialists consider Korea primarily as a base on the Asiatic continent for colonial expansion. Arriving in Korea on 8 September 1945, almost a month after the liberation, the Americans abolished all reforms that had been introduced, disbanded the people's committees, and revived the Japanese colonial administration, including the police.

The Americans created a true police state. The puppet government was headed by the protege of American monopolists, Syngman Rhee, who had spent the last 30 years in the US.

MacArthur's staff opened its campaign against Korean people's organizations immediately after the entry of American troops into Korea. Toward the end of 1945, an order "On the preservation of order" was issued; early in 1946 another "On the regulation of political parties" was published. These orders prohibited any legal activity by Korean patriotic organizations. Not satisfied with these police measures, on 27 March 1947 MacArthur's staff ordered the arrest of the entire Central Committee of the South Korean Labor Party, as well as the central committees of the All-Korea Federation of Labor Unions, the Farmers' Union, Democratic Youth Party, and the Democratic Front for Unification of the Fatherland. In one month, 12,000 members of the national-liberation movement were imprisoned. Tens of thousands suffered beatings and arrest. Many disappeared without leaving a trace. During the past 5 years, more than 150,000 suffered death at the hands of the fascists, and about 500,000 were arrested.

The police terror was accompanied by the militarization of South Korea. Acting on an order from MacArthur's staff, the puppet government instituted universal military service and proceeded to construct strategic highways. A large South Korean Army, equipped with American arms, was trained with the assistance of American advisers and instructors. American divisions stood ready in Japan and on other islands near Korea. New airfields were constructed and old ones were enlarged. The airfields at Suwon, Taejon, Seoul, and Pusan were enlarged to handle American heavy bombers and jet fighters. A new naval base was constructed near Pusan. Of a total budget of 58 billion won in 1949, the South Korean puppet government assigned 30 billion for military spending. This does not include American loans and credit.

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The masses of South Korea never made peace with Syngman Rhee. Their protests against the creation of this puppet government by the Americans finally led to a revolt. The rebels demanded the abolition of the puppet government and the unification of the country under the flag of the People's Republic. This revolt strengthened the partisan movement in South Korea. Tens of thousands of Koreans took up arms, and liberated regions appeared in the mountains. Partisan elements carried out raids on railroads, military dumps, and police headquarters and set many prisoners free. Punitive expeditions did not break the determination of the Korean people. The reactionaries were unable to crush the partisan movement. At present, the partisans are rendering great assistance to the advancing People's Army, and are operating behind the lines of the American occupiers.

The attempt to weaken popular opposition by holding new elections to the puppet "National Assembly" in May 1950 was a failure. Many of the representatives of the Syngman Rhee clique were defeated. One hundred and sixty-two deputies opposed to Syngman Rhee were elected to the National Assembly, despite the fact that just before the election more than 100 candidates not acceptable to the Americans and their followers were arrested. Such an outcome of "elections" arranged by the Americans demonstrated the strength of the people's hatred for the Americans. The demand for peaceful unification with the North became louder and more insistent. Early this summer the situation in South Korea became critical for the puppet government and its American protectors.

The political instability of the Syngman Rhee regime was increased by the deteriorating economic situation. Land under cultivation had decreased by 45 percent. Industry lay idle; production was scarcely 20 percent of the prewar level. Unemployment had reached the colossal figure of more than 3 million, out of a total population of 18 million. More than 500,000 homeless, hungry people roamed the streets in search of shelter and food. Uncontrolled inflation increased the impoverishment of the people. Prices were 1,000 times higher than before the war. The peasants sabotaged the forced contribution of rice and other foods.

In June 1950, the democratic organizations of North and South Korea expressed the wishes of the masses by demanding that an all-Korean campaign for peaceful unification of the country be undertaken. This proposal was taken under consideration by the Central Committee of the DFUF (Democratic Front for Unification of the Fatherland), which represents 70 organizations from both north and south, with an over-all membership of 10 million. On 8 June, the Central Committee of the DFUF published an appeal to all democratic parties and public organizations, to all the people of Korea, proposing that a meeting be held in mid-June in one of the towns on the 38th Parallel to discuss means for unifying the country. It was also proposed that elections be held early in August throughout all of Korea in order that the first meeting of the supreme organ of power might be held in Seoul in 15 August 1950, the fifth anniversary of the liberation. This supreme organ of power was to form a national government and thus unification would be achieved.

This proposal of the DFUF evoked a warm response from the people of South Korea, whose hope in their imminent liberation from the reactionary regime of Syngman Rhee and his American masters was now strengthened. The reactionaries, in answer to the proposal, began mass arrests and murders. The number of South Korean troops on the 38th Parallel increased, as did the number of "border" incidents provoked by them. A state of emergency was proclaimed throughout all of South Korea. Syngman Rhee and his American masters were obviously preparing to attack North Korea.

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On 25 June 1950, South Korean troops attacked the territory of North Korea. The civil war, provoked by the American imperialists, had begun.

American armed forces intervened on the side of the South Korean reactionary regime as soon as the South Korean Army began to lose battles. The aggressors tried to attach the blame for starting the war to the People's Republic. This attempt was, however, a complete failure. There are a large number of facts showing that the American imperialists had carefully prepared for this aggression in Korea beforehand. As early as July 1949, the US government had delivered 110 million dollars' worth of arms to the Syngman Rhee government. This included 140,000 rifles, antitank guns, howitzers, mortars, trucks, cartridges, shells, and other equipment, sufficient to arm a tremendous army. In 1949, under the direction of American advisors, the Syngman Rhee army carried out maneuvers near the 38th Parallel.

The former minister of internal affairs of the Syngman Rhee "government," Kim Hyo-sok; the former commander in chief of the South Korean Army, Song Ho-song; 48 deputies of the "National Assembly," and a number of officers and soldiers have stated that the attack on North Korea was planned as early as 15 July 1949. This attack was frustrated by the defection to the People's Republic of several battalions of South Korean troops and by the tremendous growth of the partisan movement in the southern provinces.

In the course of the fighting, the People's Army has obtained a number of incriminating documents abandoned by the reactionaries during their flight. These documents are military maps, reports, and orders. They all show how carefully the lackeys of American imperialism prepared for the invasion of North Korea, on orders from their American masters. Members of the illegally created "UN Commission for Korea" left a number of documents in Seoul testifying to the fact that the preparation of an unprovoked attack on North Korea in 1948 went on with the knowledge of this "commission." It is also known that the American army in Japan had been on a war footing since autumn 1949.

The successes of the People's Army of Korea can be explained first by the high moral and political spirit of its soldiers, who are fighting for a just cause -- independence of their native land. The liberation army enjoys the support of the broad masses of the Korean population. This unity of army and people has evoked fear and malice among the American interventionists, who have begun to follow a cruel and criminal scorched-earth policy; they have burned down scores of villages not only within the zone of military operations but in the territory they have evacuated. They have forced the entire population out of an area 20-30 kilometers in depth. American planes have dropped heavy demolition bombs and thousands of incendiary bombs on peaceful villages and towns far from areas of military operation.

The criminal actions of the American imperialists have strengthened the hatred of the Korean people for them. Neither bombing nor threats of the atomic bomb can break their will. The answer to American aggression was the application for enlistment of 800,000 young Koreans in the People's Army. Throughout the whole country the collection of funds for tanks and planes continues. The population has created a voluntary fund of supplies for the army. Labor competition has grown apace. Tens of thousands of partisans and volunteers in South Korea have joined the advancing People's Army. In the liberated territories, democratic reforms have been undertaken. These include the revival of people's committees, agrarian reform, opening of factories and mills, and the rebirth of democratic organizations.

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The week of active solidarity with the heroic Korean people that has been observed in many countries of the world, as well as the continuing campaign under the slogan "Hands Off Korea," has inspired the Korean patriots. The sons of Korea, confidently and selflessly fighting for their independence, have shown, as did the Chinese people before them, that the strength of the people is unconquerable and that the intentions of the warmongers are doomed to failure because the people want peace. American intervention in Korea has stepped up the campaign for the collection of signatures for the Stockholm Peace Appeal on the outlawing of atomic weapons. More than 273 million signatures have been collected to date. This is a condemnation of the criminal aggression by American imperialism and a terrible warning to the inciters of a new world war.

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